

## **BASIC MOUNTAINEERING CAMP AND THE JOURNEY**

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The Basis Mountaineering Course, was a 28 days Journey held at the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand from 14 September,2021 to 11 October,2021 ,an institute governed by the Ministry of Defense. The whole course was divided into 3 phases, the Rock Craft , the Ice Craft and the Snow Craft. First 12 days ( 14 September, 2021 to 25 September, 2021) of the course included the Acclimatization and the Rock craft activities. For the Acclimatization part, we used to cover the trek to Tekhla ( 10 kms daily) with a weight of 18 kgs on our backs in our personal Rucksacks. This was followed by a lecture at the evening. Basically, we were supposed to be busy for the whole day so that we could adapt the environment and had a good sleep at nights . During these days I got to learn about packing of Rucksacks, equipments and their uses. Also, we were told about the basis mountain manners and customs. Do's and don'ts to be followed on the mountains. The activities we performed during these days were Rope notes and Rope coils, Roping up, Rappelling, bouldering and rock climbing. Chimney Climbing, Anchoring and belaying, Tent pitching and selection of camp sites, Rope fixing, camp hygiene and sanitation,etc. The whole mixed batch of BMC 269 was divided into 14 Ropes ( teams) and all the tasks were performed in those groups only. The leaders of the groups were changed after every 3 days , therefore, this made me really more disciplined and responsible directly or indirectly.

Weather is something that can never be generalized all over the world, and especially on mountains. There are no constant weather conditions

and hence, we were taught how to predict the weather conditions as an mountaineer and how to deal with the extreme weather conditions calmly and patiently. This was followed by some map reading classes that included the map navigation activity as an practical. We also got to know about the sports climbing ,international and artificial wall climbing. On 25 September, 2021 we all left for the glaciers in buses. Before that we all went to the temple at the NIM campus. The trekking began after the 2 hours of bus travelling, where we all took our Rucksacks and were supposed to survive on mountains for the next 12 days, i.e., till 6 October, 2021. On 25 September, 2021 we all went to Tela (7-8 hours of continuous trekking) and in the evening we went for a hour of hill walking. Then we slept for the night there and next day, i.e., 26 September, 2021 we all left for the Gurjar Hut Camping location. This location took us 11 hours of continuous trekking and about 5-6 river crossings. This was our longest and the toughest trek throughout the course. Even some of our batch mate trainees ended up giving up during this Trek and we ended from the batch of 107 to the batch of 99 trainees. After spending a night at Gurjar Hut we all removed and packed the tents that were already pitched there. Then, on 27 October, 2021 we left for our Base camp location at 7:00 AM sharp in the morning. The basecamp for 269BMC was 5 hours away from the Gurjar Hut Camping site. After reaching at the BMC base camp site we had our lunch and then pitched our 10 person tents at an altitude of 12,300 feet. After that we had our respective evening and then we called off for the day. From 28 October, 2021 we went for ice craft after walking on the Moraine for 4 hours daily in the morning. And then we did our ice craft activities that included, brief introduction to the ice craft equipments, types of ice climbing, ice walking,types of ice pitons and their uses. Anchoring and belaying on ice , rope fixing, jumaring, etc. This was followed for the next 4 days, during these days we were

equipped with the technical knowledge and skills on how to ascend, descend, traverse and survive on glaciers and after that, on 2 October, 2021 we all went to the Advance Base Camp with 20 kgs on our back and thereafter, from 3 October, 2021 onwards we practiced snow craft for 3 days , i.e., till 5 October, 2021. During these days, we learnt about types of hazards on mountains, subjective and objective hazards, types of Avalanche, Causes and precautions of Avalanche, types of Crevasses different techniques for crossing Crevasses, cold injuries and Avalanche arresting etc. After completing all these 3 phases of crafts and activities we went for the height gain exercise on the last day, i.e., 6 October, 2021. We covered the Height of 15,800 feet on “Maachadhaar” . During this height gain I got the chance of seeing snowfall for the first time in my life. That, moment was the best of all the cherishing views and moments. Then, we descended down to our camp location where the Advance mountaineering course mates welcomed and congratulated us and we all congratulated them for their successful submit on the peak “ Draupadi ka Danda II” . That night, we all rested. And next morning, that is, on 7 October, 2021 we started our march for descending down towards NIM and reached down to Tela around 2-3 PM. And, then we pitched our tents for the night stay. After that we all rested for sometime and at night a bonfire was organised by us for which we were asked to collect woods from the forest area around our camp location. We all went in buddy pairs and collected some woods. After that at night the whole course batch sat together and sang some songs, enjoying the bonfire. Next morning we completed our descending and reached NIM, where we rested for the rest of the day. Next day, after breakfast we all practiced for our graduation ceremony and then, went for returning all the equipments we were provided for the course tenure. On ,10 October, 2021 in the morning we practiced once again for the graduation ceremony and then, we all had a meeting with the

Principal “Sena Medal Colonel Amit Bisht” sir. And in the evening we were handed over our badges of graduation during the Graduation ceremony and the course was called off with the group photo of all the 269 BMC alumnus and instructors. The camp encompasses National Integration wherein it shows the true importance of team spirit to its cadets, as they all have to work in team all throughout this camp, and make the very activity possible. After the completion of the camp, as a cadet I felt proud of having performed such adventurous yet risky activity all throughout the camp. The whole course was a wonderful journey that can never be erased from my memories. I’m really very grateful to our college ,Gargi College, and the 4DGBn NCC , Delhi Directorate for this huge opportunity. On 11 October, 2021 I left the NIM campus in the morning with all the learnings, knowledge and great unforgettable experience and memories. This camp has really helped me in making the better version of myself than before.